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LETTER DATED 10 SEPTEMBER 1993 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On 16 August 1993, I informed the members of the Security Council of my intention to send my Special Envoy to Kabul for discussions with Afghan government leaders regarding his mandate in Tajikistan and to ascertain the views and positions of the Tajik opposition leaders residing in Afghanistan. I also asked him to visit other countries of the region.

Ambassador Kittani visited Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Iran from 17 to 26 August 1993. In Afghanistan he met with President Burhanuddin Rabbani, Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, Foreign Minister Hedayat Amin Arsala, former Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Massoud and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Najibullah Lafraie, as well as other Afghan officials. In addition, he met with the following Tajik opposition leaders: Mr. Mohammad Himmatzodah, Mullah Abdullo Nuri, Mr. Mohammad Rasul, and Qazi Akbarhodja Turonjanzodeh. Mr. Kittani also met with President Emomali Rakhmonov and Prime Minister Abdumalik Abdulajanov of Tajikistan and with officials of the Governments of Iran and Pakistan.

In all his meetings, the Special Envoy emphasized that recent events, including various regional efforts, had created new possibilities and opportunities to deal with the conflict. He also pointed out that the two parts of his mandate, namely an agreement on a cease-fire and the establishment of a process of negotiations for a political solution were linked and must be addressed in a concurrent manner.

The Special Envoy said to all his interlocutors that it was essential that all parties to the conflict begin a process of dialogue. He stressed that the Security Council and the Secretary-General were concerned about the present situation along the border, which had significant implications for both regional and international peace and security. He also highlighted the importance of the Note by the President of the Security Council (S/26341) issued on 23 August 1993 regarding the situation in Tajikistan.

All the Afghan leaders stated that the conflict in Tajikistan was a purely internal matter which should be resolved through discussions between the Tajik Government and opposition, and that the conflict could not be resolved through further fighting. The Afghan leaders also pointed out that Afghanistan had

religious, cultural and historical links with Tajikistan and that was why they had offered humanitarian assistance to the Tajik refugees who had fled to their country. In addition, they all supported the United Nations efforts to resolve the conflict peacefully.

As for the Tajik opposition leaders whom the Special Envoy met, all of them said that they too were in favour of a peaceful solution to the conflict through negotiations. However, they emphasized that they wanted to hold discussions with authorities of the Russian Federation in the first instance. After these discussions, they would consider holding discussions with the Tajik Government. One leader said that the opposition was seeking not an Islamic State but a democratic society and the freedom to express their cultural identity and practise their religion.

The Government of Tajikistan indicated that it wanted a peaceful settlement to the conflict and supported the idea of negotiations with opposition leaders who accepted the existence and structures of the State of Tajikistan. The Government would not talk with those opposition leaders who wished to impose an Islamic State on Tajikistan and who were charged with crimes.

The other countries which the Special Envoy visited reiterated their support for a peaceful solution through negotiations among all the Tajik parties. They also expressed their full support for the efforts of the Special Envoy.

Regarding regional efforts, I believe that the three-day visit to Kabul by Chairman Rakhmonov, which concluded on 30 August 1993, was a positive development that should contribute to a reduction of tension along the border between the two countries. In this connection, I believe the release of the five captured CIS soldiers (one Kazakh and four Russians), for which the Special Envoy pressed in his discussions with Afghan leaders, was a concrete example of goodwill which will help build confidence in the region.

The Special Envoy also stressed to all his interlocutors the need for UNHCR and other United Nations agencies to be allowed to function in all the Tajik refugee camps of Northern Afghanistan. Both the Afghan authorities and the Tajik opposition leaders affirmed their full support for United Nations activities in support of the Tajik refugees in Afghanistan.

As regards the establishment of a United Nations Integrated Office in Dushanbe, as mentioned in my report to the Security Council dated 16 August 1993 (S/26311), the Tajik Government has expressed its full support for this proposal.

On 31 August in Geneva I had the opportunity to discuss the situation in Tajikistan with Mr. Andrei Kozyrev, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation. Mr. Kozyrev said that he was intending to visit Tajikistan and the neighbouring region beginning 8 September. In particular, he hoped to meet President Rabbani and other Afghan leaders to discuss Tajikistan and other matters. The Russian Federation was convinced of the necessity for a political dialogue and he intended to appoint one of his Deputy Foreign Ministers to undertake a mediating mandate and help bring the parties together. He believed that the United Nations and the Russian Federation could cooperate closely

together in a common endeavour to bring about a political settlement. I welcomed the Russian initiative and promised my support and that of my Special Envoy for it.

It is clear that a consensus is emerging on the need for a political settlement to the conflict in Tajikistan. I urge that all those who are in a position to influence any of the parties should use their good offices to persuade them to accept the principle of negotiations without preconditions and without the exclusion of any of the parties. Sharp tensions remain in the region and the possibility of further fighting still exists. I will keep the Council informed of further developments.

I would be grateful if you could bring this information to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Boutros BOUTROS-GHALI